

REMARKS

Section 103 Rejection

The Office Action rejected claims 15, 28 and 33 as unpatentable over Yachia in view of Mikus and Razavi.

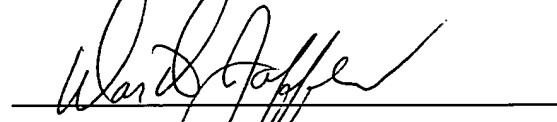
Independent claim 33 has been amended to specify that degradation or absorption of the coating on the stent reduces the diameter of the stent in an amount sufficient to facilitate removal of the stent. Razavi teaches that a stent may be coated with a biodegradable material, where the stent can be removed while leaving the biomaterial in place. Razavi at col. 6, lines 11-15. The Office Action on page 2 suggests that “it would have been an obvious expedient to use a biodegradable coating on the stent as taught by Mikus [Razavi?] with the stent of Yakkia as modified by Mikus such that a coating protects the vessel walls from a trauma of the stent by providing a smooth surface.” This is an entirely different function than achieved by the present invention. The cited patents alone and in combination do not teach or suggest the present invention as claimed: A stent with a biodegradable or bioabsorbable coating that when degraded or absorbed reduces the diameter of the stent by an amount sufficient to facilitate removal of the stent.

Applicant believes claim 33 as amended distinguishes over the cited art and is in condition for allowance along with remaining dependent claims 15 and 28. The invention as now claimed is not taught or suggested by the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has amended the claims and explained the difference between the amended claims and the cited references. If any further questions arise prior to Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: September 15, 2004

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I, Diana Dearing, certify that the enclosed papers are being deposited with the U. S. Postal Service as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Mailing Label No. EV382013770US in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on September 15, 2004.

